



AMERICAN
KENNEL CLUBSM

May 10, 2005

Don Hultman
Upper Mississippi River National Wildlife and Fish Refuge
51 East 4th St., Room 101
Winona, MN 55987

Dear Don Hultman:

We understand from a notice published in the Federal Register and/or posted on the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service web site that you are beginning the development of a Comprehensive Conservation Plan (CCP) for Upper Mississippi River National Wildlife and Fish Refuge. This is to notify you of the interest of the American Kennel Club (AKC) in the CCP planning process. As you know, hunting (which often involves use of dogs) is a compatible wildlife-dependent recreational activity specifically authorized by the National Wildlife Refuge System Improvement Act of 1997. In addition, in many refuges users engage in other compatible uses with their dogs. The AKC seeks to protect and enhance the public's enjoyment of these compatible uses with their dogs.

We would appreciate knowing how public input into your planning process will be accommodated. If public meetings, planning advisory committees, or similar mechanisms are to be employed, we would appreciate knowing about that so that we can alert dog fanciers in the vicinity of the refuge(s) who may be interested in participating. In particular, if you know of, or become aware of, any consideration to include provisions in the CCP that would specifically affect access or use by hunters or the general public with dogs, we would appreciate your informing us of that fact so that dog fanciers can have input into the development of such plans. I can be reached at the below address or by telephone at 919-816-3577 or by e-mail at mba@akc.org.

A representative of the AKC or one of our affiliated dog fanciers in your area may also contact you from time to time to monitor the planning process and discuss the interests and concerns of dog fanciers.

Let me express in advance our appreciation for your assistance in facilitating the participation of dog fanciers in public input into your CCP process.

Sincerely yours,

Melissa Allcox
Canine Legislation, Research Coordinator